



Safe to Eat Workgroup (STEW) Meeting Notes



Wednesday, November 29, 2023
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (Pacific)

[Link to Meeting Slides](#) | [Link to Meeting Recording](#)

Agenda Overview

| Item | Topic | Lead | Time |
|------|---|-------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Roll Call, Agenda Review, Goals of the Meeting | Anna Holder | 10:00 AM (10 min) |
| 2. | Information: Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process - Overview & Update Desired Outcome: Inform and update the STEW | Anna Holder | 10:10 AM (20 min) |
| 3. | Discussion: Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process - Q&A / Open Forum Desired Outcome: Inform, get feedback from the STEW | Anna Holder | 10:30 AM (80 min) |
| 4. | Wrap-up and Adjourn | Anna Holder | 11:50 PM (10 min) |

Agenda Details

Item 1. Roll Call, Agenda Review, Goals of the Meeting

- See [slides](#) (5-6) and [recording](#) for full discussion

Program/STEW Leads

Ali Dunn (SWAMP)
Anna Holder (SWAMP)

Peer Review Panel

Harry Ohlendorf (Independent)

OEHHA

Loren Chumney
Huyen Tran (Tran) Pham
Wesley (Wes) Smith

MLML/MPSL

Autumn Bonnema
Gary Ichikawa
Billy Jackl
Scot Lucas

Regional Boards

R1: Mike Thomas, Brendan Thompson
R2: Kevin Lunde, Gerardo Martinez, Kristina Yoshida
R3: Melissa Daugherty
R4:
R5: Adriana Ross
R6: Kelly Huck, Laurie Scribe
R7:
R8:
R9: Carey Kowalski, Chad Loflen, Deborah Woodward

Other

Sarah Brower (City of San Diego)
Bridgette DeShields (SF Bay RMP, Chair of TRC, Integral Consulting Inc.)
Mina Ziaei (San Diego County Water Authority)

Item 2. Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process - Overview & Update

An update on the Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process, including additional 2023 and 2024 STEW meeting dates will be presented.

- See [slides](#) (7-22) and [recording](#) for full discussion, and Item 3 below for all Q&A

Item 3. Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process - Q&A / Open Forum

Any potential presenter may use this time to ask questions about the process and/or notify Anna of their desired presentation meeting date/time.

Q&A and Discussion

- See [slides](#) (23) and [recording](#) for full discussion
- Is it possible to send out a calendar hold for Water Boards staff for upcoming STEW meetings?
 - No. If you would like a calendar hold for future meetings, please register for all meetings of interest and download the calendar holds from your individual confirmation email(s).

- Is the meeting information and registration links posted on the STEW webpage somewhere?
 - The Dec 20 meeting is already posted on the [STEW Meetings Page](#).
 - All meeting dates and registration links were provided in the [Nov 29 Meeting Agenda](#) (also posted on the [STEW Meetings Page](#)).
 - All meeting dates and registration links will be provided in the Nov 29 Meeting Notes and Slides, and will be posted on the [STEW Meetings Page](#) in early Dec.

- How is the State Board engaging with California Native American Tribes (tribes) on this topic? Is this something the Regional Boards should be doing?
 - OIMA has been engaging with tribes on bioaccumulation topics since 2021, however statewide outreach on this particular topic has not yet occurred.
 - Anna will send an email out to the Water Boards Tribal Matters email list in early Dec., with a description of the Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process, how tribes can engage, and links to resources, including the Nov 29 meeting notes and recording.
 - *If Regional Water Boards would like to conduct their own region-wide engagement*, it is recommended that they work with their [Region's Tribal Coordinator](#) to coordinate region-wide communications and ensure the use of best government to government communication practices.
 - *If Regional STEW Coordinators have an existing relationship with a particular tribe or individual that they know would be interested in bioaccumulation topics*, it is recommended that they forward relevant STEW and/or Tribal Matters email communications to individual tribal partners.

- Is there a list of tribes that are actively engaged in this workgroup? Can that list be shared?
 - There are a number of tribes that have been engaged in the STEW in recent years, however we will not be sharing that list publicly.
 - Anna will reach out to those tribes that have been engaged and/or that she has met with and have expressed interest in bioaccumulation topics.
 - Regional Water Boards staff should contact their [Region's Tribal Coordinator](#) to obtain a list of tribes and pertinent contact information for tribes in their region.

- Has the STEW engaged with the CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)? Do CDFW representatives regularly attend STEW meetings? Do we have an official STEW representative from CDFW? How will they be part of this process?
 - There are a number of tribes that have been engaged in the STEW in recent years, however Anna would not be comfortable labeling them as an official STEW representative without their consent.
 - Anna has been in communication with some CDFW representatives about the Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process and noted that receiving a presentation from them would be helpful.
 - Note that it would be particularly helpful to hear from CDFW on where they are seeing the most fishing for consumption and subsistence statewide.

- If [Water Boards teams] are not confident that we can get all sections filled out in the template for the different program perspectives (before the deadline), would it be better to use the survey and maybe submit a “partial” template to you separately?
 - No. We request the Regional Boards only submit a completed template so that a more holistic response can be provided.
 - If Water Boards representatives can not sufficiently complete the [Water Boards Template](#) by the Nov. 30 deadline, please email anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov by Nov 30 to discuss and confirm their ability to present at the Dec. 20 or Jan. 24 STEW Meeting.
 - **ACTION: THE WATER BOARDS NOV. 30, 2023 DEADLINE WAS EXTENDED TO DEC. 8, 2023.**

- Note that if anyone has information on who to contact to gain access particular water bodies of interest, please send it to anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov who will compile and share with the field collection crews at the Marine Pollution Studies Laboratory (MPSL) at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML).

- Is it possible to have an update on the extent to which we have answered the monitoring questions / met the original goals posed in the original monitoring plans from 10+ years ago?
 - Yes, however we will not be able to provide that update adequately until we receive the remaining organics data from the following surveys, for which we do not have a clear estimated time of arrival from the lab: 2020 Coast, 2021 Bass Lakes (Panel 4), 2022 Rivers, 2023 Bass Lakes (Panel 5), 2024 Coast.
 - For now, **it is STRONGLY recommended** that representatives focus on their specific needs at this time so that we can move forward with the Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process.

- To what extent has the SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program and STEW considered bioaccumulation sampling for freshwater harmful algal blooms?
 - The SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program has already started thinking about that topic and begun discussions with the SWAMP Freshwater and Estuarine Harmful Algal Bloom (FHAB) Program through the [Realignment Process](#) in the San Diego Region.
 - For the San Diego Region Realignment, we decided to collect water samples and test them for baseline cyanotoxin levels. We focused on water samples because the methodology to sample cyanotoxins levels in fish or shellfish tissues at that time was not consistent, robust, and/or cost effective.
 - For more information, please see the [Realignment Monitoring and Analysis Workplan for the San Diego Region](#). For a summary of the FHAB monitoring considerations, see Appendix 7: Algal Toxin Context and Recommendations (page 41-46 of the PDF).
 - The SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program sees the nexus of FHABs and bioaccumulation monitoring of cyanotoxins in fish and shellfish tissue worth exploring, especially if the issues is highlighted by our Water Boards, Tribes, Agency and Community-Based Organization (CBO) partners through the upcoming Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process and discussions.

- Does OEHHA have the ability to assess PFAS data and develop fish consumption advisories?
 - Not yet. OEHHA is in the early stages of scoping their ability to develop fish consumption advisories for PFAS.
- How do we track the progress of OEHHA fish advisory development, particularly for those water bodies where data were collected many years ago but advisories have not yet been developed?
 - At the Apr. 2023 STEW Meeting, OEHHA gave a presentation on their process for prioritizing the development of fish advisories and shared their priorities for 2023.
 - See the Apr 23 STEW [Notes](#) (page 5-6), [Recording](#), and [Slides](#) (page 12-22).
 - [Slide 21](#) contains the list of prioritized water bodies for 2023 - note that the slide shown in the recording displays incorrect water body region assignments, and the [linked slides](#) show the corrected water body region assignments.
 - Note that OEHHA is able to develop 9-12 advisories per year and updates the list of eligible water bodies annually. Feedback and requests from the bioaccumulation community can influence final priority decisions and is always welcome.
 - It is recommended that individuals who would like to provide feedback on OEHHA priorities do so by emailing fish@oehha.ca.gov or during OEHHA presentations at STEW meetings.
 - *Resources shared in the chat:*
 - [OEHHA Water Body Prioritization Process for Developing or Updating Fish Advisories](#) (June 2023)
 - [OEHHA Protocol for Fish Sampling and Analysis to Support the Development of Fish Advisories in California](#) (August 2022)
- How are Regions assessing where fishing and consumption of fish and shellfish is actually occurring?
 - It is a common data gap that many are facing.
 - Some Water Boards Regions have conducted or are in the process of conducting consumption surveys - see the [California fish consumption study inventory](#) for a list of published studies in CA.
 - The SWAMP Coordinator for the Los Angeles Region (Region 4) will be presenting on their recent consumption survey at the SWAMP Roundtable on Dec. 6 (open to Water Boards SWAMP representatives and contractors).
 - *Resources shared in the chat:* [CDFW Fishing Guide Application](#), which displays historical fishing locations, when a location was last stocked with fish (if applicable), fish known to be available at each location, amenities at each location (e.g. boat ramp, wheelchair access, fuel, restrooms).

- When is OEHHA able to utilize bioaccumulation monitoring data in their assessments? Do they need to wait for final data reports by the SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program?
 - OEHHA can use data as soon as it is publicly available in the [California Environmental Data Exchange Network](#) (CEDEN), and does not need to wait for the SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program to synthesize data in their data reports.
- Does OEHHA have a list of water bodies where they do not have sufficient data to develop fish consumption advisories?
 - OEHHA will be presenting their priorities and data gaps during the long-term monitoring priorities assessment discussions at an upcoming STEW meeting on Jan. 31, 2024 or Feb. 28, 2024. The specific OEHHA presentation date will be shared when the agendas for those meetings are developed in early Jan.
- Will the Water Boards Division of Water Quality (DWQ), particularly their [Integrated Report](#) team, be able to present their priorities during the upcoming long-term monitoring priorities assessment discussions?
 - Yes. Anna is already in contact with DWQ, including the Integrated Report team, and is coordinating their participation in this process and scheduling their presentation date.
- How do groups access the Bioaccumulation Monitoring Priorities Survey?
 - The [Bioaccumulation Monitoring Priorities Survey](#) is open to the public and available at this [link](#), and will be posted on the [STEW Home](#) and [SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program](#) webpages in early Dec.

Item 4. Wrap-up and Adjourn

Review next steps and action items.

Discussion

- See [slides](#) (24-28) and [recording](#) for full discussion

Action Items

- **Water Boards** - email anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov the following by ~~Nov 30, 2023~~ **(DEADLINE EXTENDED TO DEC 8, 2023)**:
 - **A completed [Water Boards Template](#)**
 - Regions who do not complete and submit a template will not be invited to present during the long-term monitoring priorities assessment discussions.
 - A day/time your SWAMP/STEW Coordinator (or selected alternate) will be able to present the priorities identified in the completed template at an upcoming STEW Meeting:
 - Wed Dec. 20, 2023 (9:30 am – 12:30 pm PT), OR
 - Wed Jan. 24 (1:30 pm – 4:30 pm PT)

- **Tribes / Agencies / Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)** interested in presenting the long-term monitoring priorities assessment discussions - email anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov the following by **Jan 1, 2024**:
 - Notification of interest in presenting in discussions, and how you would like to share information (e.g. [External Partner Template](#) or other format)
 - A day/time your representative will be able to present the priorities at an upcoming STEW Meeting:
 - Wed. Jan. 31, 2024 (9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT), OR
 - Wed. Feb. 28, 2024 (1:30 pm - 4:30 pm PT)
- **If you are unable to present but would still like to provide feedback** - please complete the [Bioaccumulation Monitoring Priorities Survey](#) by **Mar 1, 2024**
- All: Review [STEW Meetings page](#) and register for Zoom calls, download calendar invites
- Anna: Post meeting materials and recording on the [Meetings page](#), send to STEW email list once complete
- Anna: Post 2024 meeting dates and registration links the [Meetings page](#), as well as a notice of the process and links to relevant resources (e.g. [Bioaccumulation Monitoring Priorities Survey](#)) on the [STEW Home](#) and [SWAMP Bioaccumulation Monitoring Program](#) pages.

Ways provide feedback during the Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment

- [Water Boards Template](#) - **Water Boards presenters are REQUIRED to complete this template and email a copy to anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov by ~~Nov 30, 2023~~ (DEADLINE EXTENDED TO DEC 8, 2023)**. Water Boards representatives will be presenting to the STEW on:
 - Wed Dec. 20, 2023 (9:30 am – 12:30 pm PT), OR
 - Wed Jan. 24 (1:30 pm – 4:30 pm PT)
- [External Partner Template](#) - Tribes / Agencies / Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are NOT REQUIRED to complete this template to participate in the process, but we request they **please email anna.holder@waterboards.ca.gov the by Jan 1, 2024** to inform her of their interest in presenting in discussions and their availability for presenting on:
 - Wed. Jan. 31, 2024 (9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT), OR
 - Wed. Feb. 28, 2024 (1:30 pm - 4:30 pm PT)
- [Bioaccumulation Monitoring Priorities Survey](#) - for those that are unable to present at an upcoming STEW meeting but would still like to provide feedback. **Please complete the Survey by Mar 1, 2024** so feedback can be incorporated into discussion and the decision making process.
- Attend and participate in [upcoming Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment & STEW Meetings](#); [Join the STEW email list](#) to stay informed and receive updates.

Recent STEW Meetings with Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Item

| Meeting Date | Agenda Item | Meeting Documents |
|---------------|--|--|
| Nov. 29, 2023 | All - Process overview & update Q&A / Open Forum | Slides Notes Recording |
| Oct. 18, 2023 | Item 7. 2024 Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment Process | Slides (pg. 72 - 82) Notes (pg 8 - 10) Recording |
| Jan. 18, 2023 | Item 6. Planning for 2024 Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment | Slides (pg. 32 - 35) Notes (pg 7 - 8) Recording |

Upcoming Long-term Monitoring Priorities Assessment & STEW Meetings

| Meeting Date | Meeting Focus (<i>Tentative</i>) | Meeting Documents |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| Wed. Dec. 20, 2023 9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT | Process overview & update <i>Water Boards Presentations</i> | Registration Link |
| Wed. Jan. 24, 2024 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm PT | Process overview & update <i>Water Boards Presentations</i> | Registration Link |
| Wed. Jan. 31, 2024 9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT | Regular STEW Meeting <i>Tribe / Agency / CBO Presentations</i> | Registration Link * |
| Wed. Feb. 28, 2024 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm PT | Process overview & update <i>Tribe / Agency / CBO Presentations</i> | Registration Link |
| Wed. Mar. 27, 2024 9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT | Process overview & update Reflection, synthesis, priority setting | Registration Link |
| Wed. Apr. 17, 2024 9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT | Process recap Presentation of priorities & next steps | Registration Link |
| Apr. 24, 2024 9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT | Regular STEW Meeting | Registration Link * |
| Jul. 31, 2024 9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT | Regular STEW Meeting | Registration Link * |
| Oct. 30, 2024 9:30 am - 12:30 pm PT | Regular STEW Meeting | Registration Link * |

* Attendee can register for all regular STEW meetings at one time